
THE
ERRORS OF SENSIBILITY.

VOL. II.

THE

BOOK

OF THE

ERRORS OF SENSIBILITY.



FOR THE

LIBRARY

OF THE

THE
ERRORS
OF
SENSIBILITY.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
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FOR WILLIAM LANE,
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THE
TWO
OF
SENSIBILITY.
A NOVEL.



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THE
ERRORS OF SENSIBILITY.

LETTER XLVI.

LORD VINCENT.

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

I ALWAYS envied you, my dear friend, when I heard you talk of your approaching marriage, for you seemed in Elysium when possessed by that idea. But tho' I envied you, I was among those who "wondered how!" nor had

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I

I a notion that a man *in love*, and a man *not in love*, were two distinct orders of being, and had neither ideas nor language in common.

Now is your time, however, for if I am not in love, faith I am so near it that the distinction is without a difference.—I can sing, “When Delia on the plain appears” and “tell me my heart” as well as the best of you;—and if answering in the affirmative to all the pretty queries in the song, intitles a man to his *freedom*, in the paradoxical fraternity of acknowledged and *boasted slaves*, I may be admitted among you.—’Tis because I have seen my fair but twice, and have not forgotten the time when I boasted of
being

being a rational fellow, that I do not confess myself to be fairly entered.

Yesterday there dined with us all of our neighbours who ever have that honor, in compliment to my visit to Hereford-Park; and in addition to those I had been accustomed to see, appeared, a Goddess, I believe. Have I ever heard of Minerva attired by the Graces?—I suppose I must, for it was certainly her.—Something bordering on seriousness, tho' not amounting to gravity, was my proof it could not be Venus.—As to the adorners of her person, there could be no mistake;—she reminded me of the beautiful lines which describe Iphigenia, as she was led to the sa-

crifice, and in her I beheld the original, who sat to the translator of Eschylus, whose words I will borrow, because I do not immediately advert to the Greek, which perhaps might not describe Miss H. Williams so well.

That ennobled modest grace,

Which the mimic pencil tries

In the *imag'd form* to trace,

This *breathing picture* shews.

This breathing picture,—this placid image, animated by Promethean fire, and having imbibed all its light, without, alas, its heat, was I fated to see!—and surely to see must be to love! I have, however, but a dismal story to add, for whether she was of my opinion, and considered herself
only

only destined to a more sacred kind of worship than her sex generally look for, or how it happened I know not, but to own the truth she was evidently not affected beyond a polite, and even somewhat cold acknowledgement by my attentions; which must have been too marked to be overlook'd, for my mother, and (as I could not help then thinking them) the young parrots my sisters, read me a lecture, as long as I would hear it, on the impropriety of attaching myself to a young woman (a pretty appellation for *my Goddess*) whom, tho' they bestowed their protection on, they did not consider as entitled to be the only object of attention, especially when the Duke of Dartford's daughter had accom-

panied the Duchefs, her mother, fo far, to pay *them*, and indeed *me*, refpect.

I found I ought to have been enamoured of Lady Eudocia. — But gently, my Lady mother and fifters, I am not quite fchooled enough to your wifhes not to diftinguifh between Mifs Williams, and a tall, pale, pert woman of quality, who having a hundred thoufand pounds left by her maternal grandfather, thinks ſhe ſhall confer an infinite favor on whomfoever ſhe honors with her hand and heart, for they ſhall *go together* ſhe judged fit to affure us; and I thought a young Enſign of our party ſeemed to grow a little gay on the

occa-

occasion. I hope he will carry her off, if only to hear the lamentations of our family, and to be told what *I* might have done if I had valued either *fortune* or *connection* enough to bestow a little pains in obtaining them.—On neither *fortune* nor *connection* will I bestow a thought, and

“ But that I love the gentle Desdemona ! ”

Do I then love her?—I am not *quite* sure; but will walk over to Mitford, and enquire after her health, and then resolve the question when I return.

Adieu; your's,

VINCENT.

LETTER

LETTER XLVII.

MISS BAYNTON,

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

IT is impossible, my dear Sir Francis, but that I must feel delighted at your thinking of me, and at finding that the separation (I have no scruple to own, I myself regret) is not altogether easy to you. But could you a moment hesitate as to continuing with
General

General Neville; you would render me most unhappy, for you must have changed your character, and in you every alteration would be the loss of some virtue.—I scarce think I deserve your kindness.—I blush at what I am about to add, but tho' I acquaint you with a folly more, and know how far I ever was from meriting your heart, I cannot refrain from telling you how absurd I have been.—Besides, it will, perhaps, be some excuse for my strange conduct, to say I had, I scarce know how, (and Lady Caroline who had the same idea wonders at herself,) form'd a notion that Lady Susan Wentworth was not indifferent to you. My friend here has often dissuaded me from confessing this,

left

lest you should think worse of me.— You must, however, know me as I am, Bred up by a parent who had no other care but for me, and to whom my whims, bore, from her fondness the stamp of reason,—I have been accustomed to yield to my imagination in a thousand instances, and am apt to look for a degree of devotion in the minds of those I call my friends, no one is warranted to expect;—from this fault it has perhaps arisen, that those who best flattered have been, sometimes most dear to me.—That my heart knows how to distinguish may yet be perceived, in that it is to *you* I look up as my future guide;—and in that the friend *nearest* my heart is my Harriot Williams.

Lady

Lady Caroline, indeed, I am much attached to and obliged by;—she takes an interest in all my wishes,—scarce sees or scarce confesses that I have faults.—Yet I feel that I have many, and some even to her.—I am conscious I love her less than formerly; and to encrease the unworthiness of this change, I perceive it at a time when her mind seems oppressed with grief.—Something seems to press upon her heart, which she wants confidence to tell me—Some request, I think.—If I am so unfortunate as to find my mind warped a little from that earnest friendship I professed and felt,—and yet see no change in her but one that both ought and does render her more interesting—her melancholy,

lancholy,—my conduct at least shall give her no pain;—nor shall my attachment exceed that, I will evidence if she puts me to the proof. Oh, how do I wish for an occasion to shew myself warmly her friend;—the means of doing this, however, are not likely to occur.—At least I will hasten to her, and not bestow all my time on one, whom in ceasing to address, I yet doubt I shall not cease to think of.

Your's ever,

MARIA BAYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVII.

LADY CAROLINE M'LOUD,

MR. DORMER.

SINCE, my dear William, the pre-
 possessed heart of Maria admits us
 not to encourage a hope of success
 in your own character,—and since
 actual violence always involves a
 risque, I have been reflecting on the
 possibility of ensnaring her by an ar-
 tifice

tifice, that would, perhaps, influence few women, but which yet, I think, may have power over her.

Your duel with my brother was the hint on which my mind has wrought. You will see in what way I have improved upon the outlines by the letter I inclose.—I think any other scheme, as promising, would have pleased me better,—and there is a something of reality, mixed with the fiction I have dressed, that has a little shocked me. Yet why should I, who never loved my brother in his life, nor mourned over his death, not avail myself unhesitatingly of that concurrence of events which presents me with a ready clue to direct me to the heart of one
on

on whom the feeling of the moment always acts with unresisting force; and from whose very reluctance to comply I derive my surest promise of success.

A *less sacrifice* would ask no victory over herself, and therefore would have no merit to her enthusiastic mind;—but the imploring her to quit England, at the moment she is most anxious to stay, is an attempt suited to that heroism of attachment she will think it incumbent on her to shew.

Nor is my hope of success lessened, by perceiving, as I do, that her partiality for me decreases.—I there shall pique her on the very point of honor, where she is most assailable;

failable;—and a few hints that my melancholy,—my sorrows,—and consequent want of power to please, have robbed me of her affection, will bring her into such a state of self accusation, as I trust must hasten her (like frightened people who plunge into the bath at which they shiver) to rush into the evil she dreads to think of;—for to her the greatest of evils will be quitting the country where Sir Francis Neville is.—But let him thank *himself*, for playing the nurse, when he should have been converting the lover into the husband.

How we are to manage her when we have gained our first point I know not; but the spirit of enterprize and
the

the disposition to reflection go not together;—so we will keep to the former and let the latter “come when it will come,”—for which, grey-beards say, there *is a time*. I had trusted to your own skill to indite the epistle I fend you to copy, but that I understand our pretty puppet so much better than you can, therefore know best what will work on her little susceptible heart.

Adieu, withdraw not your affection from her who is building up your fortune, and making you every way the debtor of

C. M'LOUD.

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LETTER

LETTER XLIX.

TO
LADY CAROLINE M'LOUD.

(INCLOSED IN THE FOREGOING.)

MY fate and my misfortunes, rather than my crimes, compelled me to leave my dear Caroline, at a period the most afflictive, in which a man could leave the beloved of his heart,—the espoused of his soul, as well as of his hand.

Oh,

Oh, my dearest creature, little did we think how deceit engenders a succession of evils, and how many sorrows watched to succeed that moment of transport in which I called you mine! —Your brother (before unhappily prejudiced against me, from the hostility between our families) saw, with a disdain that set at defiance all expostulation, *that* love, which had arisen, and ('till the fatal moment when he intercepted my letter) had been concealed in shades we thought impenetrable. He fought me on the instant, nor did the knowledge, if indeed it reached him, that you was already my wife, soften the revenge with which he glowed;—we fought, and, alas, he fell beneath my sword!

Much more willingly would I myself have perished;—nay, but that my life is dear to you, it is no way worth preserving. Your parents, who, though they knew not the cause, knew the effect of our meeting, pursue me with rancorous hate.—In banishment,—in poverty,—in anguish for the deed I perpetrated, how shall I ask your presence with a wretch who can bestow no comfort upon you,—who is almost too wretched to receive any.

I dispatch this by my kind and benevolent friend, Mr. Dormer, who has watched me in sickness and in sorrow, and who now undertakes to
visit

visit England, in hopes you may be prevailed on to repair to me.

Oh, would that friend, of whom you write so warmly, that I think she possesses full half the heart which used to be wholly mine, accompany you, that would evidence a noble and true friendship. Your family might be led to think your journey undertaken in compliance to *her*, while in fact she had condescended to be the foother of *your* cares;—thus would you make me blessed, and still retain the protection of your father's house, when necessity or choice compelled you to seek it.

But you tell me she loves, and is about to be united to the worthy object of her affections!—Make an effort, however,—she who loves must pity lovers!—You will both be guarded by my friend, and her return may be as speedy as her wishes.—The *appearance* of being led by her inclination to France, is all we require; except, indeed, that consolation her presence, on this anxious journey, will afford you.—Oh, I could write forever, to interrupt the wretched tediousness of absence, and suspend the pangs of remorse;—but while I hold my pen, my honoured, my excellent friend is detained, and the blessing I seek protracted.

Receive,

Receive, respect him, dearest Caroline, as one who has been my only comforter and support,—as one who quits his own happy family, where he is beloved,—almost adored,—to sooth the hours of misery;—who calls in religion to the aid of a barren philosophy, to harmonize my mind,—and almost charms me in the moment of his elevating and tranquilizing converse, into forgetting that I am a murderer!—the murderer of the man I ought to have called brother. —Wretch that I am, is not every man my brother?—Had the law of love been written in my heart, no one could have forced me to wield a weapon of offence, *therefore*, no one can

can wash away the guilt I have contracted.

Oh, come to me!—aid my kind friend!—induce your fair companion to aid you both to charm me to peace; for in the solitude in which my benevolent messenger leaves me, I may (should it endure long) be driven to desperation.

Your most wretched husband,

And lover,

ROBERT HAMILTON.

LETTER

LETTER L.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS WILLIAMS.

I FEAR, my dear Julia, I shall write no pleasant letter, for I am ashamed to say, my mind is disturbed, and my plan of conduct disconcerted, by what, it seems as if I ought to be able to prevent.—Why, my beloved,
have

have I a parent's duties, without a parent's rights.

Lord Vincent, the eldest son of the Marquis of Hereford, is now at the Park, and when I first saw him, singled me out by attentions painful to receive, yet difficult to discountenance. A steady politeness, however, and a little more than my usual gravity, have in part succeeded, and withdrawn from myself the addresses of this young nobleman, who in fact possesses all those powers to captivate, which a fine person,—high rank,—polished manners,—the gaiety of a happy mind,—and the delicacy of a refined one can bestow.—He adds to this a cultivated understanding and lively

lively wit,—some satire, “yet not set down in malice” but in sport;—his company would be a pleasure to me, were it not, from the particularity of his behaviour, a pain.

He has discontinued that conduct, which alarmed his family and displeased me, by making me fear I was become an object of greater consequence to him than I wished;—but he is still perpetually at our cottage on some frivolous pretence, and apparently more than half in joke himself, will, I fear, make poor Lucy in love with him in earnest.

I often tell him that it would be better we saw him less frequently;
but

but he laughs it off;—and all my sisters reproach me, by *looks at least*, with seeking to deprive one of them, by my reserves, of so delightful a prospect as this opens;—for though his principal gallantries are addressed to Lucy, so much is dealt out generally, that I believe a little rivalry now and then takes place.—By this occurrence our rational occupations are superceded,—or pursued without attention;—and the *business* of the *toilette* is the only one we delight in.

I am steady to the working-room, that I may not (by withdrawing the fear of appearing too unreserved in my eyes, whom, though the dear girls

girls think strict, they are yet disposed both to love and respect) lessen the restraint with which Lord Vincent is received.

I see him upon the lawn which surrounds our little dwelling, and will be ready to join in receiving his visit. Adieu, therefore,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LI.

LORD VINCENT,

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

COMMEND me, dear Sir Francis, for a cunning fellow.—That is an ugly word, tho',—I might have said *clever*;—but to be honest, *that* remains to be proved. Cunning I am, however, and if it is no more than
in

in forging my own chains, it is better than idleness.

I wrote to you of the divinity I found here.—I told you she was not very apt at listening to my fine words, nor seemed much flattered by my admiration;—but I did *not tell you* I should *never* be able to infuse into her bosom one spark of that fire she so suddenly kindled in mine;—for to confess the truth, I did not foresee she was as cold as well as “chaste as the icicle that hangs on Dian’s temple,” and I had a hope, that when I laid all my blushing honors at her feet, she would condescend to exalt and wear them with me.

I

I went, however, very near a regular proposal to this effect,—when she chilled me by such freezing words, and a still more freezing manner, as led me to perceive no offers I could then make would be accepted by her. Nay, I feared pressing the subject would give her a pretence for banishing me that presence in which alone I learn the value of my existence, and what happiness may be experienced upon earth.

If simply to be near her thus transports me with extacy, what would the hope of indeed calling her mine?—what would the enjoyment of that hope produce?—Oh, Neville, let me not think of it!—lest waking from such

such a dream, my life should become hateful to me.

All my dislike to the idea of marriage, all my horrors at depending on a woman's love and constancy for the preservation of my own honor, are vanished from my mind; and I feel, that to be united to the lovely Harriot, is to be affianced to a superior being, who dispenses, by this condescension, such a portion of her own perfection, as must raise him she favors above his fellow mortals, and exempt him from their dangers and sufferings.

Being aware that this blessedness was not likely to befall me, in the present state of her mind, I have

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changed

changed my mode of conduct, and to keep up my pretence for seeking frequent admission, I make light love to her lighter sister, who is willing to swallow the frothy draught I offer, though her Argus, or rather my Juno, watches her with wary and unsleeping eyes.

You may wonder at my playing this game, and think it a foolish one, but I never before saw a woman willing to yield up her conquest; nor have I often found the unprepossessed pass their hours safely with those who sought to win upon their hearts,—and for my part, though I have raised a masked battery, all my actual attacks are made on the fair Harriot;—
and,

and, except in absenting myself as she too evidently wishes, I study her inclination, and adapt myself to her character in every measure I pursue.—What it will avail I know not.—Would you were here to advise me,—but you are otherwise occupied, and in your mistress's kindness enjoy a happiness I may long desire in vain. Viva l'espérance, however.

Your's,

VINCENT.

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LETTER

LETTER LII.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

to

LORD VINCENT.

I WAS not quite sure, my dear Lord, if I received your first letter from Hereford-Park with pleasure.—I have been accustomed to look up to Harriot Williams, as to the first of women; and had you taken it into your

your wild imagination to make light love (as you phrase it) to her, I must have addressed you more seriously than I have been wont.

You have yielded your heart to the very woman on earth I think most calculated to render her husband happy. Beauty of person, elegance of manners, and strength of understanding, are perfections evident to *all* who see and converse with her; but it is the privilege of one who like me has known her long and intimately, to discover that there is a tenderness in her heart,—a regulation in her mind,—and a sweetness in her disposition, even more rare than those

external charms she so eminently possesses.

She, it was, to whom my beloved Miss Baynton flew, on the death of her mother, for consolation and support. Had I never seen her, I should not have believed it possible there could exist a stronger passion than I felt for her friend; but the appearance of my Maria taught me, as by a magic influence, the full enchantment of love.

Never was there a creature so engaging, at the moment I first saw her oppressed with grief, and looking up to every eye for protection or for pity.

To

To *me too* she looked up. She saw in me the near friend and almost inmate of the house to which she had repaired, and was willing to be soothed and comforted by me. I lost no moment to gain upon her heart,—to fill the vacancy affliction had left,—and to turn all her animated passions into love.—I have succeeded.—This very day is the last of my absence from her.

My poor uncle is no more!—His death was, as his life, tranquil and full of asquiescence in the purposes of that Creator he was more than willing to appear before.—Years of pain had taught him the small value of earthly

earthly existence, except with respect to its relative interest;—and he seemed thankful that he had suffered enough to detach him from frivolous and unworthy pleasures.

He left me his fortune, it amounts to twenty thousand pounds.—My amiable friend, Miss Harriot Williams, is not rich,—my paternal property is very large,—Miss Baynton too possesses such affluence that a worldly man might have sought her hand on prudential motives only;—but the knowing her would have changed his *motive*, while it rivetted his *purpose*.

All

All this tends to my mentioning further, that as I know pecuniaries have an influence with the Marchioness, at least, they have not with you,—I wish it to be understood that the effects of my departed friend are appropriated to Miss Williams.

Let her not hear of this; it is ill worth mentioning even to you, but you will understand and forgive a motive that originates not with yourself.—But, my dear friend, do not trifle with her,—speak your purpose plainly, and hope the best. This loveliest of the daughters of Eve, will surely not “unsought be won,” and she must feel too forcibly the only possible

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possible distinction that can occur in her disfavour,—that of situation,—to be ready to construe gallantry into a serious declaration.

Adieu, my dear Lord, I am setting off for Lancashire.

Your's faithfully,

F. NEVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER LIII.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

I AM in such a state of distraction, dearest Madam, that I can scarce acquire collectedness enough to speak my misery:

When I came near Baynton-Grove, I felt astonished at the stillness which awaited me. I pressed forward with a
painful

painful sort of apprehension, and on reaching the house heard the horrid intelligence that my Maria had quitted it two days before, with Lady Caroline and a gentleman. I could only learn that he was a stranger there, but that they had heard his name was Dormer. —I am on the wing to pursue them. —I dare not trust myself with the apprehension that another has supplanted me in that affection I thought so firmly mine. —Nothing explained. —No one here comprehends the motive of her departure, —I only learn that it was sudden. —Wild with my fears, I go to trace her, and know my fate! —My kind and dear friend give me your compassion, for I cannot wait your advice.

F. NEVILLE.

LETTER LIV.

MISS BAYNTON,

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

(WHICH ARRIVED AT BATH AFTER HE HAD LEFT
IT FOR BAYNTON-GROVE.)

MY most dear friend,—my more than friend—the object of my tenderest and truest affection,—I feel ashamed and bewildered at writing to you, because I think I ought to have adopted

adopted no measure without your knowledge;—yet so many motives press upon me.—Lady Caroline seems as if her life depended on my consent to accompany her abroad.—I shall not remain with her, *that*, I feel, would be too great a sacrifice, even to friendship.

I will write to you the moment we land.—I wish you was not so far from me.—I think, had I been able to see you, I must have consulted you ere I took this step.—I scarcely can satisfy myself that I am right.—Yet what is the affection which makes no sacrifices?—Mine is a great one.—Heaven knows when I shall hear from you,—when I shall see you!—
My

My spirits fail at the idea.—I write
at the moment of departing.—Adieu,
dear, dear Sir,

Your's most faithfully,

MARIA BAYNTON.

P. S. My kind love to Harriot.—
I cannot write to her, I know she
would blame me.

LETTER

LETTER LV.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

I Continue to write to you, my dearest and best friend, though I scarce know what I would communicate.—I cannot trace my beloved Maria;—none of the servants know more of the destination of their mistress, than

than that they heard it said she was to go to France with Lady Caroline and the detested Dormer.—They took only one of her own footmen, and he had lived with her but a short time, —her maid accompanied her, and she is, I believe, attached to her mistress. They took the road to Lancaster, and, alas! embarked on board a vessel, of whose destination there is no trace. I have directed a vessel to be fitted out, that I may pursue and discover them if possible.—I will write if I am so blessed as to gain any information.

Ever your's,

F. NEVILLE.

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LETTER

LETTER LVI.

LORD VINCENT,**TO****MISS H. WILLIAMS.**

YOUR commands, Madam, have directed my steps to Lancaster, where I grieve to tell you I found my friend in such a state of anguish and indecision, as I will not pain your kind heart by describing.

Since

Since I find how necessary my presence is, I rejoice at the occurrence (even though it drove me from you) that made me a witness of your solicitude. Had you not received Sir Francis's letter in my presence, and in the moment of agitation unfolded its contents, the cruel reserve you testify would have withheld the intelligence it conveyed; and I should have had the insupportable misery of seeing your sorrows, unknowing of their cause, and unable to relieve them.

Oh, that my devotion to your will might have some effect on that (to me) frigid heart!—Might every day,—hour,—and minute of my existence,

E 2

spent

spent in fulfilling your wishes, entitle me but to a look of kindness, how should I rejoice in my destiny.—But, alas! I can never become worthy of your favor, and I fear I am doomed to love without hope;—not, however, without meriting to hope, if the most ardent and active submission to your wishes can entitle me to your compassion.

Sir Francis is a little comforted by a letter his Maria sent to Bath, previous to her departure, which has now only reached him.—It breathes affection, and proves she has been induced to quit England in some delusion, not from a wish to separate herself from him. Oh! how little do
men

men know their happiness!—Sir Francis is frantic with misery, and yet he is *beloved*!—would that his fate were mine!—He saw too a letter from her maid, which shews she has one honest and attached creature about her.

Believe me, Madam, I will watch carefully over our friend, and inform you of the intelligence I procure,—for which I have laid out in every possible channel. I am ever, dear Madam, your most devoted and respectful servant,

VINCENT.

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LETTER

LETTER LVII.

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS,

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

Dear Sir,

I Suffered so much from agitation, at the time Lord Vincent quitted me, that it was not in my power even to say by a few lines how much I participated in your affliction.—For my dear friend I also
grieve

grieve beyond measure, but, dear Sir, hope the best;—these sad days will pass over, and you will again be restored to happiness and Maria.—When once again you see her, no consideration, I am sure, will be powerful enough to induce you to quit her.—May the time which unites you soon approach, and your future comforts repay you for your present sufferings.

Ever, most sincerely your's,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

 LETTER LVIII.

JANE MARSDEN,

TO

WILLIAM MORRIS.

Dear William,

I AM bot a pore
 writer, bot yet I cannot thing to lave
 this land, were I lave every think I
 luv and regard, hexcepting my
 onor'd mistress, becase I am leving
 you;—and not to tel you that I woul
 nivr

nivir forget my dere William. I cannot tel wy my blessed mistres sweetes lady, is a going beyond see; but as she his always so goode and so kinde, I made bould to ax her, to day, wy she would go for to lave Sir Francis, that is such a sweete gode deer gentelman, and so gracious to poore fokes, just like her very selfe.— An wen I tould my lady so, her sweete eyes shined with the solt teers and she tride to smile;—but she did not smile that happy smile she is used to. I do not thing her heart is in this'n long journee over sees. I have no more to say at this present, but that I am ever your loving freende tell deth,

JANE MARSDEN.

LETTER

LETTER LIX.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

No.

MISS WILLIAMS.

MY heart, my dear Julia, is almost subdued by the anxiety I endure.—My poor misguided Maria has quitted England with Lady Caroline M'Loud and a gentleman. By a letter Sir Francis has received it does not appear that any change of sentiment

sentiment towards him has caused this measure;—but rather, that she has embarked in it from some romance of friendship.

I cannot trace or fathom what motive could be started plausible enough to draw her away; and must feel most anxious and unhappy, 'till I understand her inducement to this absence, and am relieved by her return.

My life passes in a struggle to attain a serenity of mind for which my character was not formed. I hold it a duty of religion, and a sentiment of virtue, to maintain self possession, and a reliance on a good Providence

Providence in all circumstances, and that our happiness is to be the result rather of the manner in which we conduct ourselves under the various events of life, than the effect of the events themselves.—But, my dear sister, what is the advantage I experience from these ideas and these efforts?—A habit of acting rationally (I hope) and steadily in the ordinary routine of my duties; while oppression of heart seizes me in every interval of repose, and all sudden evils have as much or more power over me than others.

Surprised by a letter, full of agony, from Sir Francis Neville, I fainted on receiving it, and the contents becoming

coming known to my sisters and Lord Vincent who was present, I have incurred to him the strictest obligation, at a time when the sincere discovery of his purposes and wishes makes this most improper.

Why he endeavoured to deceive me and to appear to attach himself to Lucy I cannot tell,—I only know he has given me by it additional pain, for I fear she beholds me with a jealousy not unmixed with resentment; and at the moment I have this distress drawn on me by a man I have known but a few weeks, he is not only devoting himself to serve, but actually obeying me,—for I find I earnestly besought him, in an almost frantic moment,

moment, to seek, — support, — and assist Sir Francis Neville, — whom but at that instant I found to be his particular friend. Surely such a friendship exalts the character of Lord Vincent, and induces a wonder that duplicity should form a part of it.

He writes to me in a manner, which, did it not impute too much of his present attention to his solicitude to fulfil my desire, would be altogether satisfactory, by shewing to how kind and judicious a friend I have committed him, for whose sorrows I am plunged in anxiety.

O,

O, Julia! the happiness of those dear to me has been long the sole wish of my heart!—Must I give up the hope, which alone, like the beams of a sinking sun has gilded the dark cloud of my being?—Must I know no joys either inherent or reflected? Forgive my sadness,—I ought not to afflict you by such a letter.—But did I write another, and omit tracing by my pen the characters responsive to my feelings, the drops which will not cease to fall upon my paper, would apprize you of the melancholy which overcomes me;—and I should play the dissembler, yet without deceiving the kind friend to whom all love and confidence is due from

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LX.

THE MARCHIONESS OF HEREFORD,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

Madam,

I FEEL myself much hurt, and indeed humbled, by being obliged to address you on a subject which certainly never ought to have occurred. Nor could it have occurred, but from the condescension and

and humanity with which I viewed your distressed fortune; and the opinion I had of your discretion leading me to give you that admission into my house you have so ill requited.

I find, Madam, you have been practicing on the affections of my son, Lord Vincent, who, give me leave to tell you, is, from his high rank and his fortune, to say nothing of his person and accomplishments, a match for the first heiress in England;—and *such a match only* shall he make with my Lord's and my concurrence, I assure you. I have to thank you, Miss, for much undutifulness, and indeed impertinence I never saw in him before;—but believe me, this shall not

go unrequited,—and I shall take care it shall be known in this neighbourhood, how dangerous a young person has entered into it. I have only to add, that you and your sisters, to whom I hope you will in future set a better example, are requested to discontinue your visits to Hereford-Park.

I am, Madam, your humble servant,

GERTRUDE HEREFORD.

LETTER

LETTER LXI.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

TO

THE MARCHIONESS OF HEREFORD.

THE receipt of your Ladyship's letter requires attention, yet is not easy to reply to.—To acknowledge civilities, at the very time those civilities are withdrawn, would not be very consistent with my present feelings;—

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to

to overlook them entirely would ill suit those that are past. I will, therefore, confine myself to assuring your Ladyship, that we willingly discontinue those visits at Hereford-Park, which have led to a very erroneous idea of her, who is so little dazzled by Lord Vincent's rank and fortune, that even with the addition of those many virtues and accomplishments he possesses, no consideration upon earth, (even altho' you, Madam, were to second it by your strongest influence,) could induce me to unite my fate to his. I have the honor to be your Ladyship's humble servant,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

MISS WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS.

My dearest Harriot,

I CANNOT but
mourn over that obligation by which
I am bound to this spot, at a time
when I think my presence might
console you. O, my love, could I
but "look into the seeds of time, and

see which grain would grow and which would not," I might the better write to you. — I do think, exalted creature as you are, you act upon false principles; you examine not with your clear judgment, the nature of the characters you are attached to, and you see not which way happiness might be most assuredly attained to them. — But I am silent. You, *even* you, my gentle Harriot, play the despot with your sister, and will not let me speak my full heart. Say every thing kind from me to my sisters; — and teach them to join with me in thankfulness to Heaven for that near tie which binds them to you, as well as to your affectionate,

JULIA WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXIII.

LORD VINCENT.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

THOUGH I have not been so blessed as to learn, further than by probable conjecture, that my last letter reached those hands I languish to behold, and was blessed with that touch which would entrance me with rapture, I yet venture to obtrude
again

again upon you; not doubting, that tho' the writer may be odious, the writing will become dear when it tells you we are in hopes of soon tracing your friend.

Sir Francis, by turns transported and subdued by his misfortune, has been unable to take any collected step. He was impatient to embark for Brest, whither it was said the vessel was bound;—but I was so well assured that idea was thrown out as a lure, that I (almost by force) constrained him from pursuing them thither.—Now he is all gratitude.—I bribed people to watch every arrival, and by associating with the sailors, to learn what had been their course.

course.—I judged it possible that by this means I might gain some useful information.—I failed of it, however, in this mode;—but the number of people I had spoken to, and the enquiries every where made, caused it to be noised that it was material to know the destination of the vessel we described.

Yesterday I was surprised at hearing a girl (apparently a servant maid) ask to speak to me, and not less, when, after much circumlocution and many apologies, she told me she had made so free as to come to tell me what little she knew about the ship in which the ladies went. I asked impatiently for such information as she

she could give, in consequence of which she told me, that having been with her mistress in Scotland, she had fallen into liking with a young man at Leith,—that they were not rich enough to marry and settle, but were promised to one another.—That she was surpris'd, about ten days ago, to see the young man enter, and more so when he told her he had swam to shore,—for the Captain he sail'd with had forbidden any boat to come;—but it was a fine clear night, and he had an old comrade who lived on the beach that had received and refresh'd him; and he made all haste to have a sight of her.—He durst only stay an hour, but he could not bear to be so near and not see his
 dear

dear Jenny; so he took his chance, and if he was found out why the Captain must make the most on't, for he saw no sense in laying off harbour and forbidding poor sailors to come on shore.

All I further learnt was, that the vessel was fitted out from and man'd at Leith; whither we are immediately repairing.—I have a token from Jenny, a token to her lover, as her skill was not equal to writing.

Sir Francis sends a line, but I would not trust to his distraction, for giving you this account; especially as I hoped by this communication I might obtain forgiveness for once again troubling

troubling you. Shall I never be more than forgiven?—Shall my whole heart, devoted to you, produce no return?—Forbid it, Heaven, that I should be so wretched!—the mere idea that you will not become mine fills me with horror!—What would become of me were I to behold you another's? The thought is madness!—Spare further torture to your ardent and unfortunate servant,

VINCENT.

LETTER

LETTER LXIV.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

LORD Vincent, my dearest friend, has undertaken to acquaint you with the degree of hope which opens upon us for discovering our darling fugitive. How is it, dear Madam, that your lovely friend, with such excellencies of heart and mind, should plunge into agonies little short of despair,

despair, the man who adores her; and fill your affectionate soul with distresses its natural pre-eminence should have exempted you from. My agitation is so excessive I must no further impart it, and therefore will write no more, but that I am, both for your own great kindness, and for the sympathizing and active friend you have sent me, ever your most grateful servant,

F. NEVILLE.

LETTER.

LETTER LXV.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

MISS WILLIAMS,

I HAVE some comfort in telling my dear sister, that a clue has presented itself by which we hope to develope the labyrinth in which our dear Maria is concealed.—I have a second letter from Lord Vincent, he is

is industrious to write to me, yet so writes, that, but for his expressing a passion I am every way anxious to check, I cannot be offended.

Lucy is still dissatisfied, yet I do not think her heart was touched. But her imagination has been strongly so, and this is sometimes as hard to combat as a real passion; for the mind makes fewer efforts than when attachments arise that ought to be subdued, and pride, an excellent auxiliary, tho' a bad principal in the war, takes the wrong side in a question, where ambition and vanity are more concerned than feeling. I say but little to her, for what I say is mistaken; yet

yet I hope from time, what I do not expect from reason.

The Rector of Mitford appears to me to behold Fanny with a favorable eye;—he is somewhat a formalist, but worthy, honorable, and discreet. I wish she may be inclined to listen to him,—I should have a care the less.

My brother who is just come home, I intend shall visit you, for you will delight to see him growing so manly, possessing such sweetness and force of mind.—To see him in danger, you would think courage his characteristic virtue;—in scenes of distress, ten-

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derness. He is very dear to me, and I hope much happiness through his means. Mr. Benson is very kind in keeping up and improving his knowledge in the vacations, which leading him much to our cottage, seems to have drawn on that partiality he evidences towards Fanny.

Adieu, my dear Julia,

Ever Your's,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXVI.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

I INSIST on Lord Vincent's suffering me to write on the present occasion, as I feel my heart dilate with hope, and my imagination active to present to me the object of all my wishes, as once more within my reach.

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On

On arriving at Leith we soon traced the sailor to whose passion we owed so much;—he was several days returned to his father's habitation.—The knowledge that we had seen and spoken to his dear Jane, gave us such merit in his eyes, that he was earnest to oblige and serve us.—We learnt from him, that the vessel in which all I hold precious had embarked, sailed from Lancaster to one of the Islands of the Hebrides;—that my Maria had been pensive during her voyage, and appeared astonished at the close of it;—but that the passengers were only put on shore and hastily quitted. That the lovely lady cried to them to take her back, but the Captain and another gentleman

tleman hurried her to an old Castle, and they saw no more of her.

The cursed vessel is in the harbour, and a few hours will equip her for our expedition. We have secured a sufficient number of hands for our purpose, among whom, you may be sure is honest Sandy.—Two of Lord Vincent's servants and three of my own are added to the sailors, so that with the cause we have in hand, there is no fear of failing, while exertion will avail.

My friend urges me to say a kind word for him ; and indeed, my dear Madam, I do it with pleasure, for I

know no man to whose honor or whose tenderness I would sooner commit a sister or a friend. If therefore, as I am inclined to imagine, from your never listening to those who pretended to your favor, you possess a free heart, I cannot but wish you to bestow it upon him. He will not write, he says, lest he should displease you; and he flatters me with an idea that I may have some influence.

We are, my dear Miss Williams, on the point of sailing.—Aid us with your propitious wishes, and we shall surely be successful. My transport is somewhat dashed by apprehensiveness; yet it is joy I feel at the prospect of closing

closing this dreadful suspense.—O,
should my Maria prove untrue, I
were indeed a wretch!—I will not
allow in myself so horrible a dread!—
Adieu, the first possible opportunity
you shall hear again from.

Your affectionate,

F. NEVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER LXVII.

LORD VINCENT,**TO****MISS H. WILLIAMS.**

WITHHELD, my dear Madam,
by an event you will learn with
sorrow, from returning immediately
home, I am constrained, least total
silence should fill you with more than
warranted alarm, to acquaint you at
once

once with a truth as painful to me to communicate, as it will be to you to know. But let me in the first place assure you that I did not sit down to write, 'till our apprehensions were quieted by favorable symptoms, and 'till I can bid you hope for continued good accounts.

The sad news I have to relate, is that the most excellent of men has been wounded by the hand of the basest villain;—which has inflicted on me, and the too susceptible Maria, the deepest distress.

On arriving at the little Island
whither this lovely and unsuspecting
creature

creature had been conveyed, we found the wretched Dormer (who possesses no virtue but that of courage) ready to receive and repel us.—But this last was beyond his power, and we should have enjoyed a compleat conquest, but that the resentment and frenzy of Sir Francis made him rashly lay himself open to a fierce and even skilful attack of his ferocious adversary.—He has suffered very much, but is apparently relieved from all danger.—Poor Maria is almost mad with those afflictions she has and does suffer.

Lady Caroline we have sent back to her father's house, and left her to
give

give the best account of herself her cunning and baseness will enable her to adopt.—Her shame is compleat.

After (would to Heaven it had been before) my dear friend was hurt, I, with the assistance of some brave fellows, seized on Dormer, whom I have had conveyed to the Castle at Lancaster.

Miss Baynton is not composed enough to write, and I thought any information, would be better than none, in the anxiety I was sure continued silence would occasion you. Adieu, most adored of women, did you but know how it grieves me to afflict

afflict you by this account, which I have delayed 'till I could assure you of hopes of recovery, you would pity and not hate, for conveying to you unwelcome intelligence, him, who is the most devoted of your servants,

VINCENT.

LETTER

LETTER LXVIII.

MISS BAYNTON,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

MY dearest, most beloved, most excellent friend, what shall I say to you?—I am plunged in misery!—overcome by obligations I have neither merited, nor, alas, am worthy to repay!—Agonized by fear, and estranged

estranged almost from hope.—They tell me the dear man I have injured is better,—I cannot believe it.—My nights are spent in watchfulness and alarms!—My days in tears and despondence! I feel that *my rashness* has drawn misfortune, perhaps hurried out of life the only being for whom I wish to live.

Lord Vincent tries to sooth me.—My poor Jenny too, plays the comforter,—but she is without skill, and terrifies me by relations of what *has been*, when she means to tell me that these dreadful symptoms are past;—and even his friend cannot dissimble his own apprehensions. I
know.

know he endeavours to flatter me,—
you,—and himself. My terrors give
me not a moment's respite.—The
wicked Lady Caroline is gone,—the
sight of her would kill me;—would it
not then be a blessing to

MARIA BAYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER LXIX.

THE SAME,

TO

THE SAME.

HE is worse, my dear Harriot,—
he is worse!—My fears, if nothing
else, will destroy me!—Why do I
write to you?—Why do I, who was
born to convey no joys, convey all
my sorrows to your bosom?—I know
not;—my actions have no motive!—
Reason has no share in the distracted
brain of

MARIA BAYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER LXX.

THE SAME.

TO
THE SAME.

O, MY dear friend, pity me!—
Yet why do I say pity me, at a time
I should bid you rejoice with me?—
He is better,—they assure me he will
recover;—God grant he may!—Yet
if he is to recover, why is my soul so
sad?—Why do my eyes burn?—Why
is my brain giddy?—My limbs scarce

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support

support me,—the pen falls from my enfeebled hand!—If this be the effect of joy, what would sorrow have produced?—But had you beheld, as I this instant did, his faded form and his sunk eye, how could you have rejoiced, even tho' told he was better! I had well nigh fainted; but for the first time in my life I made an effort on myself and resisted my emotion.—I felt, to agitate might be to injure him,—and love produced in me the effect reason would have failed of.—I see we are the creatures we make ourselves.—But I grow wise too late.

Adieu, my loved Harriot,

Ever Your's,

MARIA BAYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER LXXI.

LORD VINCENT,

TO

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS.

(ENCLOSING THE THREE FORGOING.)

I AM convinced, dearest Madam, whatever may be your indifference towards myself, you will forgive and be satisfied with the motive on which I have for a short time suppressed

H 2

those

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those letters I now enclose. Poor Maria's distress and alarm had so transported her mind, that I was convinced she could write nothing but what would convey terror and uncertainty to you.

Sir Francis has indeed been in great danger, and I caught the first moment to apprise you of a favorable change. The symptoms were fluctuating;—but why convey distress when the cause for apprehension might every moment be lessened.

Assure yourself, most beloved of women, that Sir Francis is really recovering.—The fears we entertained
are

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are all vanished, and weakness alone remains; which is not much to be dreaded in a constitution and at an age like his.

I will continue to write, trusting you will accept my letters on account of their subject, even tho' on no other you would condescend to receive them from the unfortunate

VINCENT.

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LETTER LXXII.

MISS WILLIAMS,

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

I AM, my dear sister, most anxiously distressed at the unusual length of your silence;—pray answer this immediately, and let me not live in that apprehension I cannot be free from, under any interruption of our
cor-

correspondence. Small cares have so little power over you, that I know you interrupt no habit of kindness but from the pressure of a more than common distress;—and Lucy's few lines, written under your direction, to say that you had suffered some disturbance, but would write soon, has rather contributed to encrease than to lessen my uneasiness.—But for that solemn promise I made, never to quit my aunt, I should hasten to you;—as it is, I dispatch this by a servant, that I may have a speedy answer; for I feel that my happiness and peace are bound up in your's.

Ever, your most affectionate sister,

J. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXXIII.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

4.

MISS WILLIAMS.

My dear sister,

I SHOULD have written to you myself, rather than have employed Lucy, but that I feared I might, by telling the distress I endured, communicate more sorrow than by leaving you in suspense.—

I

I now enclose you all those letters which have held me in so agitated a state, that I dreaded to communicate their contents, lest you should suffer from the idea that such a trial would quite subdue me. I was wrong, however, for "*present fears are less than horrible imaginings*;" and the mind is never more unequal to the exertions of reason and resolution, than when there is a doubt as to the precise evil to be combated.

You perceive I have every reason to hope Sir Francis will recover, but now the idea of the delicate and fragile frame of poor Maria more alarms me; and I dread, that the influence of self reproach will have

too much power over her constitution. I am desirous to go to her, but many motives withhold me. I will not detain the messenger you so kindly sent, but hasten to assure you my health is more than tolerable, and that I am unalterably your's,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXXIV.

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS,

TO

LORD VINCENT.

LETTERS so considerate and kind as those I have been favored with from your Lordship, awaken my gratitude, and you must accept my thanks.—I confess I am in great anxiety on account of Sir Francis and my dear Maria, to whom I have
sent

sent a friend she used to view with regard, and who I know will watch over her with the tenderest care.

My brother, though a young escort, accompanies Mrs. Morrison, who might rather in so long a way require a companion than a protector;—and Frederic is both active and attentive, so I could commit her to no better guide.

I cannot but wish, my Lord, the favors I acknowledge had been unmixed with such sentiments respecting myself, as it gives me pain to find you continue to entertain. The duty by which I am bound to that part of my family entrusted to my care,
might

might be alledged as motive sufficient to abstract my mind from the idea of engagements which must in a degree draw me from them.—But as to speak of *one* principle of conduct when *others* operate with fully equal strength, is a degree of concealment bordering on deceit; I will not withhold myself from confessing to your Lordship, that the fulfilling my father's request, by remaining single, is the *choice of my heart*; which cannot feel itself attracted even by those merits, and that partiality, which is yet considered as a high honor by your Lordship's obliged servant,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

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LETTER LXXV.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS BAYNTON.

YOU cannot imagine, my beloved friend, with how much anxiety and distress I have received your letter and melancholy account of my most valued friend, Sir Francis.—Lord Vincent teaches me to believe that he

is

is in a way of almost certain recovery; quiet then your mind, my dearest, and look forward to happy days.

I send my brother, accompanying the good Mrs. Morrison, whose care and attentions I thought might at this time be useful to you.—It would have been my first pleasure to have repaired to you myself, but I am withheld by many considerations tedious to relate, yet of power sufficient to keep me from the place where I most wish to be;—where the friend I most love requires that consolation my presence might perhaps afford.

Adieu, my dear Maria, I hardly yet know why Lady Caroline, whose
name

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name I write with more resentment
and disgust than is perhaps in any case
justifiable, withdrew you from us.—
Suffice it, we thank Heaven her in-
fluence is no more; and that the
power of reason and well-placed af-
fection alone, shall operate on my
sweet friend's future life.

Your's, with tenderest affection,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXXVI.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

WHY is it, most beloved friend, that recovering my health, I yet seem not nearer my happiness. A sadness oppresses the spirits of my angelic Maria, that all my efforts seem but temporarily to remove. You were particularly kind in sending Mrs.

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Morrison

Morrison to her; but a warm emotion of gratitude for your care, and a kind and placid reception of her old acquaintance, was all the effect it produced.

A horrid catastrophe has closed the existence of the unfortunate Dormer. Lord Vincent, at the time my life was thought in danger, had him conveyed to and confined in the Castle of Lancaster;—he entertained no hope of my recovery, and contrived to escape the horror of that punishment, which would, in case of my death, have awaited his crime, by anticipating the fate he thought inevitable.

Maria

Maria has consented to return to Baynton-Grove, as I am very anxious to restore her to that tranquil spot which will, I trust, contribute to the restoration of that quiet I cannot but think the wild and awful scenery of this Island tends to retard.

O, that you could meet us!—Your brother, whose warmth of character and affectionate politeness renders him the most interesting being I ever beheld, says, he will hasten to you with this letter, and urge you (if possible) to repair to us. *You* might sooth and calm that agitated spirit I seek in vain to compose. Mrs. Morrison attends the dear creature with the affection of a friend and the skilfulness of a nurse.

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—Medical aid may perhaps be of service.—She makes no complaints, but is not for that the less ill. In short, I feel I have every thing to dread, and that your presence can alone support me, by restoring my Maria.

Your's sincerely,

F. NEVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER LXXVII.

LORD VINCENT,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

I WOULD not, dear Madam, presume to intrude upon you, but as I have some fear you may object to favoring Baynton-Grove by your presence, whilst an object so hateful as myself remains here, I think it due to those who very essentially require the consolation of your society, to inform you, that I am about to return immediately to Oxford. Merely to see you

I hold as the first of blessings; but Heaven forbid I should fill you with perplexity or hesitation, by seeking any happiness for myself. I do not doubt that if the dreadful alternative was to occur to me of presenting you to a rival dear to your heart, or of obtaining a reluctant possession of that hand, which, freely to obtain, would raise me from Earth to Heaven, I should respect your wishes far beyond my own, so absolute is my love.— Shall not that, and the submissive devotion to your very wishes which drives me from this place, induce your compassion at least for the wretched

VINCENT.

LETTER

LETTER LXXVIII.

MISS BAYNTON,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

HOW, my dear friend, can I sufficiently thank you?—Comfort is necessary to me, and you endeavour to send me a comforter; but Mrs. Morrison does not succeed!—she is affectionate and assiduous, but she is not Harriot Williams. The happiest sensation

sation she can or does give me, results from my consciousness of that kindness which induced you to send to me this truly good creature. Add to this, that she is full of your praises, — was with your poor father when near his death, — heard him fill the air with praises of and blessings on his Harriot. O, my friend, I cannot write! — come to me, let me expose to you my weaknesses and my griefs; to you only I know how to unburthen my full heart. Come to me if you love your

MARIA BAYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER LXXIX.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS WILLIAMS.

I FEEL, my dear Julia, a much more composed state of spirits than when I wrote to you last. Having dispatched my brother with Mrs. Morrifon to my Maria, I am consoled by knowing she has with her an active, kind, and judicious friend; and one
whose

whole heart is so devoted to me, that there is no exertion she would spare to give me satisfaction. My brother, on his return will give me certain information how far my presence is requisite.

I feel greatly relieved from my cares at home by a recent occurrence. Mr. Benson has proposed himself to my sister Fanny.—He has a little estate he proposes to settle upon her, and is satisfied with the small sum I can spare to her;—which I rather consider as helping their first establishment, than in any other point of view.—And he kindly says, he has no further wish than to render

render his home more worthy of my sister.

He presses for an early day, which (as I find Fanny is won by his disinterested attachment) I readily concur in; especially, as if I am constrained to absent myself, the Parsonage will afford a safe and respectable abode for Lucy and Charlotte, during my stay at Baynton-Grove.

We met yesterday, by accident, (for otherwise we are quite estranged from Lord Hereford's family,) Mr. Herbert, Lord Vincent's younger brother;—and I was amazed, and perhaps Lucy more than amazed, at the effect her real beauty had upon him.

him. She, however, who was at first filled with spleen at Lord Vincent's defection, has in part, from her own good heart, and in part by my persuasions and arguments, lost her tenaciousness on the subject of love; and she sees Mr. Herbert's admiration, as the transient offering the young and ardent pay to loveliness.

I am not very positive this is the case though, for as with the same animation he wants the delicacy of his brother, he exhibited so warm an admiration as appeared to arise from a fascinated heart.

As Lucy's mind is now softened to my wish, I hope to keep this youth

at

at the distance I desire,—for he might not be in earnest to marry my sister; and the history of a young woman's hopes and fears resting on the purposes of any man, is generally the history of the degradation of her character.—I could not bear that my Lucy should be subject to any man's caprices;—besides, I should feel in a painful predicament as to the family who have shewn such contempt of our alliance.

I am always writing volumes to my Julia, but you read the whole heart of your

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXXX.

THE SAME,

to

THE SAME.

MY brother is returned, and brings with him letters which convince me my presence is absolutely necessary with dear Maria ; whose mind seems from all accounts to be in a most distressing state, and to require the
con-

consolation of friendly communication.

Frederic is pressing with me to go to her instantly, for he says he is sure some grief she will only enter into an explanation of to me, weighs down her mind; and will (he adds) weigh down her delicate body with it.

He speaks of her with a rapture which, if I did not view it as the effect of youthful enthusiasm, I should dread as the offspring of love;—yet this cannot be, because he wishes nothing so ardently as her union with Sir Francis.

Yes,

Yes, one thing more has got possession of his mind,—Lord Vincent has won upon him to plead his cause, and he does it most strenuously;—but you, my sister, know how impossible it is for him to influence that heart which scarce can trace the rise, and never will experience the decline of that attachment which is interwoven in my being.

When I first found it necessary to controul my passion, I sought to extinguish it entirely; but finding that exceeded my power, considering the great worth and constant communication in which I lived with the object of my affection,—I contented myself
by

by putting a guard on my external conduct, and referring all my ideas of happiness to such events as might be productive of the greatest good to him. Thus I have nourished (while his prospects have been happy) rather an exhilarating than a consuming fire, and saved myself both from discovery and self reproach.

There has been but one moment in which I have feared being betrayed. But Lord Vincent, honorable as he is, would have pursued a different conduct, had he, from my agitation, discovered that my interest was warmer than that of friendship; and would not now quit Baynton-Grove that I might

repair thither unmolested and unobserved.

Once I thought my father was apprised of my prepossession; but, as if it had been so, he would assuredly have spoken to me on the subject,—I have changed my opinion.—You, from my childhood, have known all that has passed in that mind which has been as open to you as to your

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXI.

THE SAME,

TO

THE SAME.

I AM most unhappy, my dear Julia, at the state in which I find my lovely friend.—Her form is wasted to a shadow, and her mind seems both raised and perplexed, without being disordered.

K 2

She

She will not, at present hear of a union with Sir Fancis; yet shews him a warmer attachment than at any preceding period.—To me her affection is almost enthusiastic; but as she says nothing of her motives to delay her marriage, and seems to shun particular conversation on that subject,—I do not yet press her.

Accept these few lines only, for I wish to be as little as possible from my friend.

Your's ever,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXII.

THE HON. EDWARD HERBERT,

TO

LORD VINCENT.

WHAT is the reason, my dear brother, you come not home this vacation, but mope yourself in a college where you have neither society nor business.

I have a fine time of it without you, hearing my lady mother declaim

K 2

on

on the dignity of *my family*, and the small attention *I* pay to my rank in life; by visiting all the inferior people of the country as if they were my equals.

All this arises from my having fought, wherever I could find, a little gypsy who has bewitched me, I think, —a Miss Lucy Williams.—She is handsomer than any thing I ever saw, and adds to that beauty, spirit and grace.

The Marchioness has forbidden her brother-in-law (I scarcely know why, tho' she says she has wise reasons,) our mansion; and he, to be even with her, keeps me out of a much pleasanter,

fanter,—his own. I am not, however, very easily checked, and though the man is so damn'd steady and calm I know not how to deal with him, I am resolved stratagem shall work what resolution cannot, and if I can but win dear Lucy to *wish with me*, I defy the Doctor and the Devil to boot.

I have indited a letter to her, secundum artem, that is the art of love; and faith, 'tis so natural to me to speak sweet words to her, it is scarcely art after all.—Pray come and cheer a little,

Your's,

EDWARD HERBERT.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXIII.

THE HON. EDWARD HERBERT,

TO

MISS LUCY WILLIAMS.

RESTLESS excellence!—adored
beauty!—lovely incognita!—for such
you are to me!—I cannot even pro-
cure a sight of you.—Your doors are
shut against him who approaches
them as he would a temple, to adore
the

the divinity at her proper shrine.—
Did I then see but to love—and love
but to die?—Are the flames you have
kindled in my breast raised only to
consume me?—and shall they reflect
back no warmth on their original
source?

Let me *but see you!*—let me
but plead that passion, which, like
your charms is unbounded. Only to
see, to speak to you is all I ask!—
Surely you sometimes stroll in those
fields, behind the parsonage, which are
sheltered by thick and lofty trees from
the rough winds of Heaven!—I will
walk there in hope.—It is unnecessary
I should banish you from that lovely
spot,

spot, where I am assured you have been accustomed to walk. I will retire, if you command, the moment I have beheld you.—Oh, blest, so far as by a look, your humble and ardent adorer,

EDWARD HERBERT.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXIV.

THE REV. RICHARD BENSON,

TO

MISS WILLIAMS.

I AM sorry, dear Madam, to introduce myself to you by disclosing my perplexities, rather than in a manner more consonant to my wishes. My uneasiness, however, admits not that I should delay imparting to you
what

gives me serious distress and difficulty.

The second son of the Marquis of Hereford, who is lately come into this country, makes so open and bold an attack on the heart of Miss Lucy Williams, that I am confounded at the advances the lady's growing partiality gives me little power to repel.

I some time resisted and concealed his attempts to visit at my house, but yesterday he defeated all my plans, and I find I can no longer hold this intruder at bay.—My wife accompanied Lucy, by my desire, in all her walks, but this did not prevent Mr. Herbert joining them;—and as Fanny
has

has not much resolution, nor thinks with reluctance of the chance of her sister's being so well married, — I found the young man had returned with them to the house. He scrupled not to make love, even in my presence, professing, that the difficulty he had found in forcing his way into my *Castle*, as he disdainfully stiled it, made it necessary he should use the present moment to the best advantage. — He hoped the ladies would be less cruel than myself, who had sought to exclude him from the only spot in which he could know happiness.

Lucy expressed surprise, and gratified him by evidencing *she* had no share in those refusals of admittance
of

of which he complained;—and added, she did not apprehend Mr. Benson would be unwilling she should see her friends, when they were kind enough to enquire for her.

I have written to Mr. Herbert, as I wished to ascertain his purposes, but he has not condescended to favor me with an answer; and though he repeats his visits here, and even asked Lucy to grant him a moment's audience, which he prolonged to an hour, he never so much as appeared conscious of receiving it. In short, this young man's assurance quite overpowers me; and as I cannot bear to distress Miss H. Williams, who quitted us (the day after my Fanny
bleased.

bleſſed me with her hand) with a moſt full and anxious heart, I am obliged to trouble you for your kind advice.

Miſs Charlotte entirely coincides with Mr. Herbert's wiſhes, and even my dear wife does not ſee the affair quite with my eyes. You may depend on every poſſible care and attention in the power of your reſpectful friend and affectionate brother,

RICHARD BENSON.

END OF VOL. II.